



Karen Spangler photo
The wife and two daughters of a USS Hopper Sailor watch as the ship and its crew depart Pearl Harbor on Tuesday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

USS Hopper deploys, supports Operation Enduring Freedom

Karen S. Spangler
Assistant Editor

Families and friends waved tearful goodbyes to the 300 officers and Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Hopper (DDG 70) as it departed Pearl Harbor on Tuesday morning in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The stirring strains of "I'm Proud to Be An American" floated from the ship through the morning air while Sailors in immaculate summer white uniforms manned the rails as Hopper pulled away. On the pier, families held up signs of aloha, and small children with sad faces watched as the ship became more distant.

"It's a pretty difficult time, especially with everything that's happening in the world," said Leilani Vallesteros. "It's pretty stressful," she added. Her two young daughters - seven-year-old Alyssa and four-year-old Ashley - clung close to their mother as they bid farewell to their dad, Engineman chief Ron Vallesteros.

"Six months is a long time," said Vallesteros. "We'll spend a lot of time at the beach and do things that we normally do. We'll just try to keep everything the same - the normal routine," she explained as she discussed how the family would deal with the deployment.

Hopper is equipped with the Aegis combat weapons system which combines space-age communication, radar and weapons technologies in a single platform for unlimited flexibility.

The Arleigh Burke class destroyer is under the command of Cmdr. Ken Auten.

Commissioned on Sept. 6, 1997 in San Francisco, Calif., Hopper is named after Rear Adm. Grace Murray Hopper. Rear Adm. Hopper, known as the mother of com-



Karen Spangler photo
More than 300 officers and Sailors deployed aboard USS Hopper (DDG 70) Tuesday in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

puting, is credited with the development of the first computer compiler and the first computer programming language which helped to revolutionize the world of computers. "Amazing Grace," as she was nicknamed, was called out of retirement by the Navy in 1972 and retired for a second time in 1986. She died in 1992.

While conducting maritime operations in the Western Pacific and the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the ship will operate as part of a maritime expeditionary force. Fully trained to successfully carry out the full spectrum of maritime combat operations, the crew of Hopper is prepared to protect the interests of the United States and its allies. But they'll also be looking forward to a happy reunion with their families when they have accomplished their mission and can return to Pearl Harbor.

Other Pearl Harbor-based ships, USS Russell (DDG 59) and USS Port Royal (CG 73) are also currently deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Karen Spangler photo
The sister of a Hopper Sailor holds up a sign of support as the ship departed Pearl Harbor on Tuesday on deployment.

Marines, HPD team up for terrorist response exercise

Lance Cpl. Jason E. Miller
Marine Corps Base Hawaii PAO

Heightened areas of security have become increasingly familiar across the country since the terrorist attacks that occurred Sept. 11, and Hawaii is no exception.

In an effort to keep the state more secure, the state of Hawaii and the Department of Defense have recently been developing plans and training employees in working together to cope with any possible terrorist threat.

Soon after the World Trade Center and Pentagon incidents, the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command appointed the Commander, U.S. Army, Pacific as the Joint Rear Area Coordinator for Hawaii, or "JRAC-HI." In this position, the new JRAC-HI is responsible for ensuring the close coordination of Homeland Defense efforts with all the armed forces in Hawaii as well as with local, state and federal civilian agencies in defense of critical military resources and in its support to civil authorities.

During a JRAC-HI training exercise held March 28, HPD and Marines from Fox Company 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, worked together to defend an area high value target from attack.

Nearly 40 police officers and 60 Marines headed up the security training evolution.

The scenario involved a terrorist threat aimed at an important communications



Lance Cpl. Jason E. Miller photo
A Fox 2/3 rifleman provides cover fire support for his off loading fellow Marines. The Marines teamed up with the Honolulu Police Department in a terrorist response exercise March 25.

site on the island. In the scenario, two similar sites on neighboring islands had already been attacked and disabled.

The Honolulu Police Department arrived on scene first and set up a perimeter around 7 a.m. until they received support. They also secured any buildings on the installation.

The officers were armed with shotguns, bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets and a variety of other self-defense and enemy restraining equipment. No live ammo

was used.

The 2/3 Marines subsequently arrived aboard CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters with HMH - 363 deployed from K-Bay. The Marines, decked out in full combat gear and camouflage face paint, exited the aircraft and immediately took positions at weak points in the HPD stronghold.

Leaders from both 2/3 and HPD met soon after the insertion of the Marines to coordinate the continued defense of the area. Checkpoints were placed strategi-

cally along any roads leading into and out of the affected area.

Marines armed with M249 squad automatic weapons entrenched, while other Marines provided cover with M-16A2 service rifles.

Maj. William Gulledge, an HPD officer, headed the command element of the exercise. Officers from 2/3 constantly reported new information to HPD and assisted in making command decisions with police officers and also carried out any orders that were issued.

At one point, hikers reported seeing suspicious individuals near the site. A patrol of Marines was dispatched to investigate and tend to the situation.

Midway through the exercise, Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee flew in to observe some of the inter-department training that was taking place.

"There was a lot of great coordination," said Brig Gen. McAbee. "Unity of command is something we stress in the Marine Corps and there has got to be one person in charge."

While this was a combined exercise, it was clear that HPD was in charge of the operation and the Marines were there to assist. Leaders from 2/3 helped in making command decisions, but in the end, took orders from HPD officers.

"This was really an interesting exercise," exclaimed Maj. Gulledge. "There will definitely be a lot more of this kind of training for us in the future."

\$35 Million Navy housing construction project announced

New homes to replace older housing for Navy families in Pearl Harbor

Karen S. Spangler
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The Navy has awarded a \$35 million project for construction of replacement housing in the Pearl Harbor Naval Base complex. Congressman Neil Abercrombie, ranking member of the House Armed Services Military Installations and Facilities Subcommittee, made the announcement March 25. The design build contract was awarded to Lend Lease Actus, LLC., home-based in Napa, Calif.

The project includes the design

and construction of approximately 170 housing units in the Pearl Harbor area. Work could begin later this year with completion expected in June 2004. Award of the contract will mean more work for Hawaii's construction workers and will pump money into the state economy.

"This project means a lot to Hawaii's economy. It will provide jobs for the construction trades and work for island subcontractors," said Congressman Abercrombie.

He also talked about providing quality homes for servicemen who

are serving duty assignments in dangerous places. "This work will replace units that have reached the end of their useful life with new housing for military personnel. At a time when we are sending our servicemembers into harm's way, we need to ensure that they and their families have decent places to live," he said.

Replacement housing units will provide up-to-date, quality housing for Pearl Harbor-based Sailors and their families. The units replace structures that were built in the 1940s and 1950s.

Such amenities as garages, central air conditioning, mini blinds and vertical blinds, ceiling fans, state-of-the-art kitchens and appliances, and laundry rooms equipped with full-size washers and dryers

will be included in the new homes.

Capt. Norman Ho, Assistant Chief of Staff for Housing, stressed the Navy's continued commitment to enhance quality of life for Sailors and their families. "Congress and the Navy's leadership are backing up their commitment to ensure that our Sailors and their families have a decent place to live and enhanced quality of life," he said.

"It's important that our Sailors and their families feel that Pearl Harbor is not just a duty station, but is their home. We have undertaken [the project] to improve the living standards and quality of life for our Sailors. Certainly, safe, comfortable and inviting homes are a significant part of that equation," he continued.

Recent Navy construction proj-

ects have provided modern, quality housing for Sailors and their families in the neighborhoods of Hale Moku (318 units), Moanalua Terrace (752 units) and Doris Miller Park (158 units). A total of 164 new homes were constructed in Pearl City in 1996. As part of a five-phase project at Pearl City, 197 units were replaced and another 79 homes were revitalized. Those homes were completed in 1998-1999. An additional 192 homes are currently undergoing replacement at Pearl City and are expected to be completed this year.

You could call it a Sailor's dream come true - stationed at the best homeport the Navy has to offer, Pearl Harbor, and living in a brand new Navy home.